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Richard Vestal
Jennifer Jernigan

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Interactive Implementation of High Value Care

Richard A. Vestal II, MD; Jennifer Jernigan, MD
University of New Mexico Hospital, Albuquerque, NM

Background

With rising health care costs, there is increased emphasis on providing more cost-effective care. Although growth in US health care costs may be slowing, costs are still fifty percent higher than the next highest countries. Choosing Wisely and the ACP-AAIM High Value Care (ACP-AAIM HVC) Curriculum were developed to increase attention toward reducing unnecessary tests and procedures. Covering six topics relevant to high value care, the ACP-AAIM HVC curriculum was developed to help educators teach residents to be “good stewards of limited healthcare resources.”

Improving knowledge of costs relative to benefits of care is particularly pertinent with trainees who are historically presumed to provide less cost-effective care. Medicare indirect medical education funds are provided specifically to cover the increased costs associated with teaching hospitals, including increased tests and ancillary services. Highlighting the importance of this topic, a proposal has been made to elevate “cost-conscious care and stewardship of resources” out of the realm of systems based practice and into a seventh general competency for physicians.

Questionnaires administered to our house staff identified a lack of high value care curriculum as an area for improvement, but we were unsure how best to effectively introduce the topic.

Here we review our experience in implementing the ACP-AAIM high value care curriculum in interactive Morning Report sessions with medical students, residents and faculty.

Description

A series of interactive cases were written based on either real clinical encounters or published case reports (see example). Attendees at Morning Report were broken into groups based on clinical experience and were presented the case. The groups were able to ask clarifying questions and given three rounds of diagnostic testing with the goal of arriving at the correct diagnosis. Attempting to limit spending was not stated as a goal of the exercise. Participants were given the following rules before starting the exercise:

1. You have three rounds of testing to arrive at the correct diagnosis
2. You may utilize any laboratory test, imaging study or consultation you wish
3. Prior to the first round of testing, you must determine if the workup will be medical students:
4. Residents:
5. Interns:
6. Attendings

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1. You have three rounds of testing to arrive at the correct diagnosis
2. You may utilize any laboratory test, imaging study or consultation you wish
3. Prior to the first round of testing, you must determine if the workup will be performed as an inpatient or outpatient
4. Reasonable diagnostic criteria must be met for the diagnosis
5. If the patient has an emergent cause of their symptoms, they will die (and your team will be disqualified) if either of the following occurs:
   - The patient is worked up as an outpatient
   - No diagnostic testing in the first round would lead to the diagnosis

Once the three rounds were complete, we compared spending for each group, using cost estimates from www.healthcarebluebook.com. A short presentation covering relevant topics was then given utilizing resources from the ACP-AAIM HVC curriculum. Applicable recommendations from www.choosingwisely.org were also reviewed, focusing on how they impacted the most appropriate workup of the patient.

Following this exercise, a voluntary anonymous survey was administered to evaluate pre-intervention familiarity with the ACP-AAIM HVC curriculum and the Choosing Wisely initiative as well as satisfaction with pre-intervention exposure to these topics. The same survey also evaluated post-intervention likeliness of utilizing these resources as well as the perceived effectiveness of the exercises and interest in participating in future similar exercises.

Results

48 participants returned the survey. The level of training was third year medical student (58 percent), PGY1 (17 percent), PGY2/3 (17 percent) and attending (8 percent).

Participants ranked their pre-intervention familiarity with the ACP-AAIM HVC, familiarity with Choosing Wisely and satisfaction with prior exposure to these topics at 3.0, 2.8 and 4.3 respectively on a 1-10 scale. Following the intervention, participants rated the effectiveness of the intervention and interest in future similar sessions as 8.2 and 8.3 respectively.

Additionally, they rated their likelihood of independently accessing the ACP-AAIM HVC curriculum and www.choosingwisely.org as 7.3 and 7.6 respectively.

Our interactive and competition-based educational approach to introducing high value care curriculum was enthusiastically received and was successful in increasing awareness of the core topics addressed in the ACP-AAIM HVC curriculum and in promoting the utilization of choosingwisely.org.

Conclusion

Morning Report is attended only by house staff on inpatient wards, meaning residents and students are introduced to the resources, but must then independently access them to complete the curriculum. Additionally, though our survey results suggest participants are more likely to independently access these resources, this may reflect the phenomenon of motivated reasoning, as we were unable to objectively measure utilization of these resources pre and post intervention. We are exploring the feasibility of utilizing a similar approach at our weekly protected didactic conference to provide more consistent and complete coverage of the topics for all residents.

Limitations

References